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**For Written Answer on :** **09/05/2018**

**Question Number(s)**: **122** **Question Reference(s): 20367/18**

**Department:** **Education and Skills**

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**QUESTION**

To ask the Minister for Education and Skills his plans to review the decision not to expand the shared apprenticeship scheme for the construction sector; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**REPLY**

Registrations on craft apprenticeships have grown strongly in recent years following a very significant collapse in the number of apprenticeship registrations between 2008-2011. SOLAS, in partnership with Construction Industry Federation (CIF) and Waterford Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB), operated a pilot initiative in the last year to test the viability of a shared apprenticeship scheme.  Following analysis of the pilot outcomes and in consultation with both the CIF and WWETB, I understand that SOLAS decided not to operationalise the pilot initiative more widely.  In particular, it was found that the pilot did not attract employers in sufficient numbers to suggest that the scheme had the potential to have a significant impact on apprenticeship recruitment.  However, I understand from SOLAS that they are currently in discussions with representatives from the construction industry to assess how the scheme could be made more viable.